

speech at the
United Nations
by Fidel Castro

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Fidel Castro

SPEECH AT THE UNITED NATIONS

This is the translation of the speech delivered by Dr. Fidel Castro, Prime Minister of Cuba, at the Eight Hundred and Seventy-Second Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations on Monday, September 26, 1960.

Although it has been said of us that we speak at great length, you may rest assured that we shall endeavor to be brief and to put before you what we consider it our duty to say. We shall also speak slowly in order to co-operate with the interpreters.

Some people may think that we are very annoyed and upset by the treatment that the Cuban delegation has received. This is not the case. We understand full well the reason for the state of things. That is why we are not irritated. Nor need anyone concern himself that Cuba will spare any effort to bring about an understanding in the world. But of this you may be sure, we shall speak frankly.

It is extremely expensive to send a delegation to the United Nations. We of the under-developed countries do not have too many resources to squander, and when we do spend money in this fashion it is because we wish to speak frankly in this meeting of the representatives of practically all the countries of the world.

The speakers who preceded me here on the rostrum have expressed their concern as regards the problems that are of interest to the whole world. We too are concerned with the same problems. However, in the case of Cuba a special circumstance exists, and that is that Cuba, as far as the world today is concerned, must itself be a preoccupation because different speakers who have spoken here quite correctly have said that among the problems at present facing the world there is the problem of Cuba.

And that is a fact. Apart from the problems that concern the world today, Cuba has problems that concern Cuba itself, problems that worry our people. Much has been said of the world desire for peace, that it is the desire of all people and, as such, it is also the desire of our people. But this peace that the world wishes to preserve is the peace with which we, the Cubans, have not been able to count upon for a long time. The dangers which other peoples of the world may now consider more or less far removed are problems and preoccupations that for us are very near and close. It has not been easy to come here to this Assembly to talk about the problems of Cuba; it has not been easy for us to come here. I do not know whether you are privileged in this respect. Are we, the representatives of the Cuban delegation, the representatives of the type of Government that you would call the worst in the world? Are we, the representatives of the Cuban delegation, such as to warrant and deserve the bad treatment that we have received? And why has our delegation been singled out? Cuba has sent many delegations to the United Nations. Cuba has been represented in the United Nations by many different persons; yet it was we who were singled out for such exceptional measures: confinement to the island of Manhattan; notice to all hotels not to rent rooms to us, hostility, and under the pretext of security, isolation.

Perhaps none of you, gentlemen delegates, who bring, not the individual representation of anyone, but rather that of your respective countries and for which reason, the matters which refer to each of you should concern you for what each of you represent; perhaps none of you, I say, upon your arrival in the City of New York has had to suffer the personal mistreatment, the physically humiliating treatment, as that which was meted out to the President of the Cuban delegation.

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I am not trying to arouse anyone in this Assembly. I am merely stating the truth. It was time for us to take the floor and to speak. Much has been said about us. For many days we have been a bone of contention. The newspapers have referred to us, but we have held our peace. We cannot defend ourselves against attacks in this country, but our day to tell the truth has dawned and, therefore, we will speak the truth.

As I have said, we had to undergo degrading and humiliating treatment including eviction from the hotel in which we were living and efforts at extortion. We headed towards another hotel, without any upsets on our part, and we did all in our power to avoid difficulties. We refrained from leaving our hotel rooms and we went nowhere except to this assembly hall of the United Nations on the few times that we have come to the General Assembly. We also accepted an invitation to a reception at the Soviet Embassy, but we have curtailed our movements in order to avoid difficulties and problems. Yet, this did not suffice, this did not mean that we were left in peace.

There has been considerable Cuban emigration to this country. There are more than 100,000 Cubans who have come to this country during the past twenty years because in their own land, in the land in which they would have preferred to live and the land to which they would like to return, economic reasons forced them to leave. These Cubans who came to this country dedicated and devoted themselves to work. They respected and they respect the laws of the land in which they live, yet they feel close to their own country and to the revolution. They had no problems. But one day a different type of visitor began to arrive in this country. War criminals began to arrive. Individuals arrived who in some cases had murdered hundreds of our compatriots. It did not take long for publicity here to encourage them. It did not take long for the authorities to receive them warmly and to encourage them, and naturally that encouragement is reflected in their conduct and is the reason for the frequent incidents with the Cuban people who many years earlier had come to this country and who were honestly working in this country.

One of these incidents provoked by those who receive support from the systematic campaigns against Cuba and with the connivance of the authorities caused the death of a child. That was a lamentable event and we should all lament such an outcome. The guilty ones were not the Cubans who are living here, nor much less were we, we who have come to represent Cuba. Yet undoubtedly you have all seen the headlines in the newspapers that stated that pro-Castro groups had killed a young girl of ten years of age and with the hypocrisy which is characteristic of those who meddle with relations between Cuba and this country, a spokesman from the White House immediately made declarations to the world accusing us, indeed, fixing the guilt on the Cuban delegation. Of course, his Excellency, the representative of the United States of America to this assembly did not miss the opportunity of adding his voice to the farce, sending a telegram to the Venezuelan Government and also sending a telegram of condolences to the family, as though they felt called upon to give some explanation from the United Nations for something for which the Cuban delegation was virtually responsible. And yet it did not stop there. When we were forced to leave one of the hotels of this city and were coming to the United Nations Headquarters, while other efforts were being made, a humble hotel of this city, a hotel of the Negroes of Harlem, took us in.

The reply came while we were speaking to the Secretary-General. Nevertheless, an official of the State Department did all in his power to try to stop us from being given rooms in the hotel. But, at that moment, as though magically, hotels began springing up all over New York, and hotels that had previously refused to grant us rooms offered to give us rooms even for nothing. But we, out of elemental reciprocity accepted the hotel in Harlem. We felt then that we had earned the right to peace and quiet. But no, this was not granted us.

Already in Harlem, since nobody could stop us from living there, the campaigns of slander and defamation began. The news was bruited about that the Cuban delegation had found itself a home in a brothel. For some, a humble hotel in Harlem, a hotel inhabited by the Negroes of the United States, may obviously be a brothel. But besides this they have heaped slander on the Cuban delegation without even respecting the female members of our delegation who work with our delegation or who are part of our delegation.

Were we of the caliber of men that we are described as, then imperialism would not have lost hope, as it has lost hope long ago, of buying us or of seducing us in some way. But, since for a long

time imperialism has lost its hope of getting us back and it never had a right to hope so – after affirming that the Cuban delegation had taken rooms in a brothel they should recognize the fact that imperialist finance capital is a prostitute that cannot seduce us – and it is not necessarily the “respectful prostitute” of Jean Paul Sartre.

The problem of Cuba. Perhaps some of you may be well aware of the facts; others, perhaps, may not – it all depends on the sources of information – but, as far as the world is concerned the problem of Cuba has come to a head, it has appeared in the last two years, and as such it is a new problem. The world had not had many reasons to know that Cuba existed. For many it was an offshoot of the United States. And this is the case for many citizens of this very country – Cuba was virtually a colony of the United States. As far as the map was concerned, the map said something different. Cuba was colored differently from the color that was used for the United States; but in reality Cuba was a colony of the United States.

How did our country become a colony of the United States? It was not so by origin; it was not the same men who colonized the United States and who colonized Cuba. The ethnic roots and the cultural roots of Cuba are very different, and for centuries this root grew stronger.

Cuba was the last country of America to shake off Spanish colonial rule, to cast off, with all due respect to the representative of Spain, the Spanish colonial yoke; and because it was the last, Cuba had to struggle because Spain had one last foothold in America and Spain defended it with tooth and nail. Our people, small in numbers, scarcely a million inhabitants at that time, had to stand alone for nearly thirty years confronting an army that was considered to be one of the strongest in Europe. Against the small national population of Cuba the Spanish Government mobilized such an enormous number that it compared favorably with the armies it had mobilized to combat all the efforts of all Latin American countries to achieve independence. Half a million Spanish soldiers fought against the heroic and indomitable desire of our people to be free. For thirty years the Cubans fought alone for their independence; thirty years which are also part of the strength with which we love independence and freedom.

But, according to the opinion of John Adams, one of the Presidents of the United States of the beginning of the last century, Cuba was like a fruit, like a ripe apple on the Spanish tree that had to fall, as soon as its ripeness had reached the right point, into the hands of the United States.

The Spanish power had worn itself out in Cuba. Spain had neither the men nor the economic resources left with which to continue the fight in Cuba. Spain had been routed. Apparently the apple was ripe – and the United States Government held out its open hands. It was not only one apple that fell. A number of apples fell into the open hands of the United States. Puerto Rico fell – the heroic Puerto Rico which had begun its struggle for independence at the same time as Cuba. The Philippine Islands fell. A number of other possessions fell.

But the measures used to dominate our country had to be different. Our country had struggled for independence and world opinion was in our favor. Therefore our country had to be taken in a different way. The Cubans who had fought for our independence, the Cubans who at that very moment were giving their blood and their lives believed in all good faith in the joint resolution of the United States Congress of April 20, 1898 which declared that “Cuba is, and by right ought to be, free and independent.” The people of the United States were with the Cubans in their struggle for independence. That joint declaration was a law adopted by the Congress of the United States by virtue of which war was declared on Spain.

But that illusion was ended by a cruel deception. After two years of military occupation of our country, the unexpected happened. At the very moment when the people of Cuba, through their Constituent Assembly, were drafting the Constitution of the Republic, a new law was passed by the United States Congress, a law proposed by Senator Platt, of such unhappy memories for the Cubans. That law stated that the Constitution of Cuba must have a rider under which the United States would be granted the right to intervene in Cuba's political affairs and to lease certain parts of Cuba for naval bases or coaling stations. In other words, under a law passed by the legislative body of a foreign country Cuba's Constitution had to contain a rider with those provisions, and the drafters of our constitution were clearly told that if they did not accept the rider the occupation forces would

not be withdrawn. That is to say, the legislative body of a foreign country imposed upon our country, imposed by force, its right to intervene and its right to lease bases or naval stations.

It is well, I think, for countries just entering this Organization, countries just beginning their independent life, to bear in mind our history for the similarities which they may find waiting for them along their own road and if not they, then those who may come after them, or their children, or their grandchildren, although it seems to us that we shall not have to wait that long.

The colonization of our country then began: the acquisition of the best agricultural land by United States firms, concessions of Cuban natural resources and mines, concessions of public services for purposes of exploitation, commercial concessions, concessions of all types, which when linked with the constitutional right of intervention in our country, turned our country from a Spanish colony into a North American colony.

Colonies do not speak. Colonies are not recognized in the world. Colonies are not allowed to express their opinions until they are granted permission to do so. That is why our colony and its problems were unknown to the rest of the world. In geography books there appeared one more flag, one more coat of arms. There was another color on the maps. But there was no independent republic on the maps where the word "Cuba" appeared. Let everyone realize that by allowing ourselves to be mistaken in this respect we only play the parts of fools. Let no one be mistaken. There was no independent republic. It was a colony where orders were given by the Ambassador of the United States of America. We are not ashamed of proclaiming this from the rooftops. On the contrary: we are proud that we can say that today no embassy rules our people; our people are governed by Cuba's people.

Once again, the Cuban people had to turn and fight to achieve independence and that independence was finally attained after seven bloody years of tyranny. What tyranny? The tyranny of those who in our country were nothing but the cat's-paws of those who dominated our country economically.

How can any unpopular system, inimical to the interests of the people, stay in power unless it be by force? Will we have to explain to the representatives of our sister republics of Latin America what military tyrannies are? Will we have to outline to them how these tyrannies have kept themselves in power? Will we have to draw a blueprint of the history of many of those tyrannies that are already classical? Will we have to show them what kept them in power? Will we have to say what national and international interests kept them at the helm?

The military group that tyrannized over our country was built upon the most reactionary sectors of the nation and, over and above all, was based upon the foreign interests that dominated the economy of our country. Everybody here knows, and we understand that even the Government of the United States recognizes, that that was the type of government that was preferred by the monopolies. Why? Because, with power, you can repress any claims upon the part of the people. With power, you repress strikes that seek better conditions of work and of life. With power, you quell all movements on the part of the peasants to own the land. With power, you can quash the most deeply felt aspirations of the nation.

That is why the governments of force were the governments that the guiding circles of the United States policy preferred. That is why governments of force were able to stay in the saddle for so long. And that is why governments of force still rule in America.

Naturally, everything depends on the circumstances in order to receive or not to receive the support of the United States Government. For example, it is now said that the United States Government opposes one of these governments of force, the government of Trujillo. But they do not say that they are against another one of these governments of force — that of Nicaragua or that of Paraguay, for example. In Nicaragua there is no longer a government of force; it is a monarchy that is as constitutional almost as that of the United Kingdom, where the reins are handed down from fathers to sons.

The same would have occurred in our own country. It was the type of government of force – that of Fulgencio Batista – that was most appropriate for the United States monopolies in Cuba, but that was not the type of government that was appropriate for the Cuban people. Therefore, the Cuban people, squandering life, rose up and threw that government out. And, when the revolution was successful in Cuba, what did it uncover? What did it find? What marvels lay spread out before the eyes of the victorious revolutionaries of Cuba? First of all, the revolution found that 600,000 Cubans, able and ready to work, were unemployed – as many, proportionally, as were unemployed in the United States at the time of the great depression which shook this country, and which almost produced a catastrophe in the United States. This is what we met with – permanent unemployment in my country. Three million out of a population of somewhat over six million had no electric light and none of the advantages and comforts of electricity. Three and a half million out of a total population of more than six million lived in huts, in slums, without the slightest sanitary facilities. In the cities, rents took almost one-third of family incomes. Electricity rates and rents were among the highest in the world.

Thirty-seven and one-half per cent of our population were illiterate; 70 per cent of the rural children lacked teachers; 2 per cent of our population suffered from tuberculosis, that is to say, one hundred thousand persons, out of a total population of a little over six million, were suffering from the ravages of tuberculosis. Ninety-five per cent of the children in rural areas were suffering from parasites. Infant mortality was astronomical. The standard of living was the opposite. On the other hand, 85 per cent of the small farmers were paying rent on their land to the extent of almost 30 per cent of their gross income, whilst 1-1/2 per cent of the total landowners controlled 46 per cent of the total area of the country. Of course, the proportion of hospital beds to the number of inhabitants of the country was ludicrous when compared with countries that have even half-way decent medical services. Public services, electricity and telephone services, all belonged to United States monopolies. A major portion of the banking business, of importing business and the oil refineries, a greater part of the sugar production, the lion's share of the arable land of Cuba and the most important industries in all fields in Cuba belonged to North American companies.

The balance of payments in the last ten years, from 1950 to 1960, has been favorable for the United States vis-a-vis Cuba to the extent of one billion dollars. This is without taking into account the hundreds of millions of dollars that were extracted from the treasury of the country by the corrupt officials of the tyranny and were later deposited in United States or European banks. One billion dollars in ten years! The poor and under-developed country in the Caribbean, with 600,000 unemployed, was contributing to the economic development of the most highly industrialized country in the world!

This was the situation that confronted us. Yet it should not surprise many of the countries represented in this Assembly, because, when all is said and done, what we have said about Cuba is, one may say, an X-ray that could be superimposed and applied to many of the countries here represented in the Assembly.

What alternative was there for the revolutionary Government? To betray the people? As far as the President of the United States is concerned, what we have done is treason to our people, but it surely would not have been so if, instead of the revolutionary Government being true to its people, it had rather been true to the monopolies that were exploiting Cuba.

At least let note be taken here of the marvels that were laid out before our eyes as we won our revolution. They were no more and no less than the usual marvels of imperialism, which are in themselves no more and no less than the marvels of the free world as far as we, the colonies, are concerned.

We surely cannot be blamed if there were 600,000 unemployed in Cuba and 37.5 per cent of the population were illiterate, if 2 per cent of the population suffered from tuberculosis and 95 per cent suffered from parasites. Until that moment none of us had any say in the destiny of our country. Until that moment when the revolution was victorious, those whose voices were listened to in our country were the monopolies. Did anyone say them nay? Did anyone hinder them? No one. The monopolies went about their nefarious business, and there we found the fruit of the monopolies.

What was the state of the reserves of the nation? When the tyrant Batista came to power there was five hundred million dollars in the national treasury. It was a goodly amount, and it would have been well to have invested it in the development, industrial or otherwise, of the country. When the revolution was victorious, we found in our reserves seventy million dollars. Did they ever show any concern for the economic and industrial development of our country? No, never. That is why we were astonished, and we are still amazed and stunned when we hear it said here that extraordinary concern is shown by the United States Government for the fate of the countries of Latin America, of Africa and of Asia. We cannot overcome our amazement, because after fifty years we had there the results.

What has the revolutionary government done? What is the crime committed by the revolutionary government, for it to be pilloried – as it has been here – for it to find itself confronted by as powerful enemies as it has been shown us we have? Did the problems with the United States Government come up at the first moment? No. When we came to power, were we possessed with the desire to find international difficulties? No. We did not pause to consider international problems. No revolutionary government achieving power wants international problems. What it wants to do is devote itself to the settling of its own problems at home; to carry out a program for the betterment of the people, as all governments do that are truly concerned with the progress of their country.

The first unfriendly act perpetrated by the Government of the United States was to throw open its doors to a gang of murderers, bloodthirsty criminals. Men who had murdered hundreds of defenseless peasants, who had never tired of torturing prisoners for many, many years, who had killed right and left. These hordes were received by this country with open arms. We were deeply amazed. Why this unfriendly act on the part of the Government of the United States towards Cuba? Why this act of hostility? At that time we could not quite understand. Now we see clearly the reasons.

Was that policy in accord with a correct treatment of Cuba; of the relations between the United States and Cuba? But it should not have been – the injured party was Cuba. We were the injured party, because the system of the Government of Batista was kept in power with the assistance of the Government of the United States of America. The Batista regime stayed in power with the assistance of tanks, planes and weapons supplied by the Government of the United States.

The system of Batista's Government kept in power thanks to the use of an army, the officers of which were instructed and trained by a military mission of the United States Government; and we trust that no official of the United States will dare to deny that fact and that truth.

Then when the rebel army arrived in Havana in the most important military camp of that city, it met the American military group. That had been an army that had been routed; that had been an army that had surrendered. We could have considered that these foreign officers were training the enemies of the people. We could have considered them prisoners of war. Yet we did not do so. We merely asked the members of that military mission of the United States in Havana to go home, because, after all, we did not need their lessons; their pupils had been beaten.

I have here a document. Do not be surprised at its appearance. It is a torn document. It is an ancient military pact, by virtue of which the Batista regime had received generous assistance from the Government of the United States. It is rather interesting to note the contents of Article 2 of this agreement:

“The Government of the Republic of Cuba commits itself to make efficient use of the assistance it receives from the Government of the United States of America in conformity and pursuant to the present agreement, in order to carry out the plans of defense accepted by both Governments, pursuant to which the two Governments would take part in important missions for the defense of the Western Hemisphere, and unless previous agreement is obtained from the Government of the United States” –

And I repeat:

“– and unless previous agreement is obtained from the Government of the United States of America such assistance will not be devoted to other ends than those for which such assistance has been given.”

That assistance was used to combat and to fight the Cuban revolutionaries, and for that purpose it obviously, then, had received the previous agreement of the Government of the United States. Even when a few months before the war was over there was in this country an arms embargo on weapons sent, or intended for Batista, after six years and more of military assistance, once this embargo was solemnly declared on the shipment of weapons to Batista the rebel army had documentary proof that the forces of Batista, of the tyrant, had been supplied with three hundred rockets, to be fired from planes.

When the Cuban immigrants in this country submitted these documents to North American public opinion as proof, the United States Government could only find the specious explanation, that we were mistaken; that the United States had not supplied new weapons to the army of the tyranny; that they had merely exchanged some rockets of a different calibre, that were the wrong size for their planes, and supplied them with new rockets that were useful for the planes of the tyranny, and that in fact were fired at us when we were in the mountains.

I must say that this is a sui generis explanation of a contradiction when such contradiction can be neither justified nor explained. According to the United States, this was not assistance. Was it then some type of technical assistance?

Why then, were all these antecedents a cause for concern for our people? Anyone here, even the most naive and innocent and guileless, knows that in these modern times, with the revolution that has taken place in military equipment and technology, the weapons from the last war have become obsolete for a modern war; that fifty tanks or armored cars and a few obsolete and outdated aircraft cannot defend a continent, cannot defend any hemisphere. But they are useful to oppress peoples, especially if those peoples who are to be oppressed have no weapons. They are useful for the intimidation of peoples; they are useful for whatever one may wish to do with them. They are useful in the defense of the outposts of monopoly. That is why these hemisphere defense pacts might better have been described as "defense pacts of United States monopolies."

So the Revolutionary Government began to take the first steps. The first was the fifty per cent reduction in rents paid by families – a very just measure since, as I said earlier, there were families paying up to one-third of their incomes for rent. People had been the victims of housing speculation and urban real estate had also been the subject of speculation at the cost of the economy of the entire Cuban people. But when the Revolutionary Government reduced the rents by fifty per cent, there were those who were considerably upset. Yes; a few who owned those buildings and apartment houses felt displeasure. But the people rushed into the streets rejoicing, as they would in any country, even here in New York, if rents were reduced by fifty per cent for all families. But it caused no problems with the monopolies. Some of the United States monopolies owned large buildings, but they were few in number.

Then another law was passed, a law cancelling the concessions which had been granted by the tyranny of Batista to the telephone company which was a United States monopoly. Aided by the helplessness of the people, valuable concessions had been obtained. The Revolutionary Government cancelled those concessions and re-established normal prices for telephone services; and that is how the conflict with the United States monopolies began.

The third measure was the reduction of the cost of electricity, which had been one of the highest in the world. Then followed the second conflict with the United States monopolies. Already they began to paint us as reds, simply because we had clashed head on with the interests of United States monopolies.

Then followed another law, an essential law, inevitable, an inevitable one as far as our own people were concerned, and a law which, sooner or later, will be passed all over the world, at least by all those peoples who have not yet passed it. This was the agrarian reform law. Naturally, in theory everybody agrees with agrarian reform – in theory. Nobody would dare to deny it; nobody except an ignoramus would deny that agrarian reform in the under-developed countries of the world is one of the essential conditions for economic development. In Cuba, even the landowners agreed about agrarian reform – only they wanted their own kind of reform, like the agrarian reform defended by many theorists; an agrarian reform which neither in their way nor in any other way is ever

put into effect, as long as it can be avoided. Agrarian reform is something that is recognized by the economic bodies of the United Nations. It is something over which nobody argues.

In our country such reform was inevitable. More than 200,000 peasant families lived in the country without land upon which to plant the essential foodstuffs. Without agrarian reform our country could not have taken its first tottering step towards development, but we were able finally to take that step. We instituted an agrarian reform. Was it radical? It was a radical reform. Was it very radical? It was not very radical. We instituted an agrarian reform adjusted to the needs of our development, adjusted to the possibilities of agricultural development, that is, an agrarian reform that would solve the problems of the landless peasants, that would solve the problem of the lack of basic foodstuffs, that would solve the great unemployment problem on the land, that would end, once and for all, the ghastly misery which existed in the rural areas of our country.

And that is where the first major difficulty arose. In the neighboring Republic of Guatemala a similar case had occurred. When the agrarian reform was agreed to in Guatemala, problems mushroomed. And I notify my colleagues of the Latin American Republics and of Africa and of Asia with complete honesty, that when they plan a just and fair agrarian reform they must be ready to confront situations similar to that which confronted us, especially if the best and largest lands are in the hands of the monopolists of the United States, as was the situation in Cuba.

It may well be that we may be accused of giving bad advice in this Assembly. It is not our intention to keep anybody from his just sleep. We are merely desirous of expressing facts — though facts are enough to keep anybody awake.

Then the question of payments and of indemnities came up. Notes from the State Department rained on Cuba. They never asked us about our problems, not even out of a desire to express condolence or commiseration, or because of the hand that they had had in creating the problems. They never asked us how many died of starvation in our country, how many were suffering from tuberculosis, how many were unemployed. No, they did not ask about that. The feeling of solidarity regarding our needs was never expressed. The conversations of the representative of the United States Government were concerned with the telephone company and with the problem of the lands owned by American companies. How were we going to pay?

Naturally, the first thing that should have been asked was, "What with?", not "How?"

Can you gentlemen conceive how a poor, under-developed country carrying the onus of 600,000 unemployed, with such a high number of sick and illiterate, whose reserves have been sapped, that has contributed to the economy of a powerful country to the tune of one billion dollars in ten years, can have the wherewithal to pay for the lands that are going to be affected by the agrarian reform, or at least pay for them on the conditions on which the North American State Department wanted to be paid in compensation for their affected interests?

They demanded three things: speedy, efficient and just payment. Do you understand that language? Speedy, efficient and just payment? That means, "Pay right now, in dollars and whatever we may ask for our lands."

We were not 150 per cent communists at that time. We just appeared slightly pink. We were not confiscating lands. We simply proposed to pay for them in twenty years, and the only way in which we could pay for them was by bonds — bonds which would mature in twenty years — at 4-1/2 per cent interest, which would be amortized yearly. How were we to be able to pay for these lands in dollars? How were we going to pay cash, on the spot, and how could we pay for them what they asked? It was ludicrous.

It is obvious that under those circumstances, we had to choose between carrying through an agrarian reform and nothing. If we chose nothing then there would be a perpetuation of the economic misery of our country, and if we did carry out the agrarian reform then we were exposing ourselves to incurring the hatred of the Government of the powerful neighbor of the north.

We went ahead with the agrarian reform. Naturally, for a representative of the Netherlands, for example, or the representative of any country of Europe, the limits we set to lands and to estates would be a surprise because they were so big. The maximum amount of land set forth in the Agrarian Reform Law was 400 hectares. In Europe 400 (four hundred) hectares is a true estate. In Cuba, where there were American monopolies that had up to 200,000 hectares (200,000 hectares, in case anyone thinks he has misheard), an agrarian reform law reducing the maximum to four hundred hectares was, to those monopolies and land-owners, an inadmissible law.

But the trouble was that in our country it was not only the land that was in the hands of the American monopolies. The best mines were in the hands of those monopolies. For example, Cuba produces much nickel. All the nickel was exploited by American interests, and under the tyranny of Batista, an American company, the Moa Bay, had obtained such a juicy concession that in a mere five years – mark my words, in a mere five years – it intended amortizing an investment of 120 million dollars. A 120 million-dollar investment amortized in five years! That was a juicy plum.

And who had given the Moa Bay company this concession through the intercession of the Government of the United States? Quite simply, the tyrannical government of Fulgencio Batista, the government which was there to defend the interests of the monopolies. And what is more – and this is an absolutely certain fact – completely tax-free. What were these enterprises going to leave for the Cubans? The empty, worked-out mines, the impoverished land, without the slightest contribution to the economic development of our country.

So the Revolutionary Government passed a mining law which obliged these monopolies to pay a 25 per cent tax on the exportation of minerals.

The attitude of the Revolutionary Government already had been too bold. It had clashed with the interests of the international electric trust; it had clashed with the interests of the international telephone trust; it had clashed with the interests of the international mining trusts; it had clashed with the interests of the United Fruit Company and it had clashed, virtually, with the most powerful interests of the United States, which, as you know, are very closely linked one with the other. And that was more than the Government of the United States could tolerate – that is, the representatives of the United States monopolies.

Then there began a new stage of punishment meted out to our revolution. Can anyone who objectively analyses the facts, who is ready to think honestly and not as the UPI and the AP tell him, to think with his head and to draw conclusions from the logic of his own thinking, to see the facts without prejudice, sincerely and honestly – can anyone who does this consider that the things which the Revolutionary Government did were such as to decree the destruction of the Cuban Revolution? No.

But the interests which were affected by the Cuban Revolution were not concerned over the case of Cuba; they were not being ruined by the measures of the Cuban Revolutionary Government. That was not the problem. The problem lay in the fact that those same interests owned the natural wealth and resources of the greater part of the peoples of the world.

So then the attitude of the Cuban Revolution had to receive its punishment. Punitive actions of every type – even the destruction of those foolhardy people – had to be carried out against the audacity of the Revolutionary Government. On our honor we swear that up to that time we had not had the opportunity even to exchange letters with the distinguished Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev. That is to say that, when for the North American press and the international news agencies who supply information to the world Cuba was already a Communist Government, a Red peril ninety miles from the United States, with a Government dominated by Communists, the Revolutionary Government had not even had the opportunity of establishing diplomatic or commercial relations with the Soviet Union. But hysteria can go to any length; hysteria is capable of making the most unlikely and absurd claims. But of course, let no one for one moment think that we are going to intone here a mea culpa. There will be no mea culpa. We do not have to ask anyone's pardon. What we have done we have done with our eyes wide open and, above all, fully convinced of our right to do it.

Then the threats began against our sugar quota. The cheap philosophy of imperialism began to show its nobility, its egotistical and exploiting nobility; began to show its kindness to Cuba, declaring that they were paying us a preferential price for sugar which amounted to a subsidy to Cuban sugar – a sugar which was not so sweet for Cubans since we were not the owners of the best sugar-producing lands or of the greatest sugar plants. Furthermore, in that claim there lay hidden the true history of Cuban sugar, of the sacrifices which had been imposed on my country, of the periods when it was economically attacked.

Earlier it was not a question of quotas; it was a question of customs tariffs. By force of one of those laws or one of those agreements which are made “between the shark and the sardine,” the United States, through an agreement which they called a reciprocity agreement, obtained a series of concessions for its product enabling them to compete easily and displace from the Cuban market the products of its friends the English and the French, as often happens among friends. In exchange for this, certain tariff concessions were granted on our sugar which, on the other hand, could be unilaterally changed in accordance with the will of the Congress or the Government of the United States. And that is what happened. When they deemed it appropriate in their interests they raised the tariff, and our sugar could not enter. Or if it did, it entered facing competition on the United States market at disadvantageous prices. When the fear of war occurred, the tariffs were reduced. Of course, since Cuba was the source of supply of sugar that was closest to home, that source of sugar had to be assured. Then the tariffs were lowered and production was encouraged. During the war years, when the price of sugar was up in the stratosphere in the rest of the world, we were selling our sugar to the United States at a lower price, despite the fact that we were the only source of supply of sugar for the United States. At the end of the war our economy collapsed. The errors committed here in distribution of that raw material were paid for by us.

Prices went up enormously at the end of the First World War. There was tremendous encouragement to production. The reduction of prices, which ruined the Cuban sugar refineries, which sweetly fell into the hands of – I will give you one guess – United States banks, because when the Cuban nationals became bankrupt, the United States banks in Cuba became wealthy. So the situation continued until the 1930's.

The United States Government, trying to find a formula that would consolidate its interests, since it had need for supplies in the interests of its domestic producers, set up a system of quotas. That quota would presumably be based upon the historic participation of the different sources of supply on the market, and the historic participation of my country's supply would have been almost 50 per cent of the United States market. However when the quota was set up, our participation was reduced to 28 per cent and the few advantages granted to us by those laws were gradually taken away in successive laws. Naturally the colony depended on the motherland. The economy of the colony had been organized by the motherland. The colony had to be subjected to the motherland and if the colony took measures to declare itself free from the mother country, the motherland would take measures to crush her.

As the United States Government was conscious of the importance of our economy to the American market, that Government began to issue a series of warnings that our quota would be reduced further. Concurrently, other activities were taking place in the United States of America, the activity of the counter-revolutionaries.

One afternoon an airplane coming from the north flew over one of the sugar refineries and dropped a bomb. This was a strange and unheard of event, but we knew full well where that plane came from. On another afternoon another plane flew over our sugar cane fields and dropped a few incendiary bombs. Thus these events which began sporadically continued systematically. One afternoon – when, it is true, a number of American tourist agencies were visiting Cuba in the fulfilment of an effort made by the Revolutionary Government to promote tourism as one of the sources of national income – a plane manufactured in the United States, one of those used in the Second World War, flew over Havana, our capital, dropping pamphlets and a few hand grenades. Naturally some anti-aircraft guns went into action; and the result was more than forty victims, between the grenades dropped by the plane and the anti-aircraft fire because, as you know, some of the projectiles explode on contacting any resisting object. As I said, the result was more than forty victims. There were children with their entrails torn out, old men and old women wantonly killed. This was not the first

time as far as we were concerned. No, young girls and young boys, old men and old women, men and women, have very often been destroyed and murdered in the villages of Cuba by North American bombs supplied to the tyrant Batista. On one occasion, eighty workers were killed when a too mysterious explosion took place on a ship carrying Belgian weapons to our country, after many efforts made by the United States Government to prevent the Belgian Government from selling weapons to us.

There have been dozens of victims in the war; eighty families were shattered by an explosion; there were forty victims caused by an airplane that was "peacefully" flying over our territory. The authorities of the United States Government denied the fact that these planes came from United States territory. What is more, they said that the plane was safely in its hangar. But when one of our magazines published the photograph of this plane in its hangar, then the United States authorities took possession of the plane. And, as expected, a version of the affair was issued to the effect that this was not very important and that these victims had not died because of the bombs but because of the anti-aircraft fire and those who were to blame for this crime, and those who had caused these deaths were wandering about peacefully in the United States, where they were not even prevented from continuing these acts of aggression.

To his Excellency the representative of the United States, I may perhaps take the opportunity of telling him that there are many mothers in Cuba who are still hoping to receive a telegram of condolence from the United States Government for the children who were murdered by bombs from the United States.

The planes went and came back. There was no evidence; there was no proof unless you define what you mean by proof. That plane was there, photographed and captured. Yet we were told that this plane did not drop any bombs. It is not known how the United States authorities were so well informed. These pirate planes continued to fly over our territory dropping incendiary bombs. Millions upon millions of pesos were lost in the burning fields of sugar cane. Many people of the towns, humble people of Cuba, who saw this wealth burning, a wealth which was now theirs, were themselves burned in the struggle against these fires, against these persistent and tenacious bombings by these pirate airplanes.

Until one day, while flying over one of the sugar refineries, a bomb explodes, the plane explodes and the Revolutionary Government has the opportunity of gathering the pieces of the pilot, who in fact was an American pilot, whose papers were found, and a North American plane and all the proofs of the field from which he had taken off. That plane had passed between two bases in the United States.

Then, in view of this irrefutable proof, the United States Government gave an explanation to the Cuban Government. Its conduct in this case was not the same as it was in connection with the U-2. When it was proved that the planes were leaving the United States, the Government of the United States did not proclaim its right to burn our cane fields. The United States Government apologized, and said it was sorry. Well, we were lucky, after all, because after the incident of the U-2 the United States Government did not even apologize; it proclaimed its right to carry out overflights over Soviet territory. That is bad luck for the Soviets.

But we do not have too many anti-aircraft batteries and further planes were able to continue until the sugar was harvested. When there was no more cane in the fields, the bombs stopped. We believed we were the only country in the world in which this happened, although I do recall that at the time of his visit President Sukarno told us that this was not the case, that we were not the only people in the world, that they, too, had suffered certain problems with certain American planes which flew over their territory. I do not know whether I have committed an indiscretion in mentioning this; I hope not.

The fact of the matter is that, at least in this peaceful hemisphere, we were the country that, without being at war with anyone, had to stand the constant attack of pirate planes. And could those planes leave and enter North American territory with impunity? Well, gentlemen, we invite you to think about this for a little while and we also invite the people of the United States, if by chance the United States people have the opportunity of knowing the matters which are discussed here — to

meditate upon this matter for, according to the statements of the United States Government itself, the territory of the United States is completely protected against any air incursion and that the defense measures in United States territory are infallible. It is stated that the defense of the world that they call "free" – because, so far as we are concerned, it has not been free, at least not until January 1, 1959 – is complete and impregnable. If this be the case, and I am not talking about stratosphere planes, I am merely speaking of little aeroplanes that can barely fly 150 miles an hour, how is it that these planes are able to come in and out of American national territory undetected and that they can go through two bases and go back over these two same bases without the United States Government even being aware of the fact that these planes are coming in and out?

This means one of two things. Either the United States Government is lying to the people of the United States and the United States is not impregnable against aerial incursions or the American Government was an accomplice in these aerial incursions.

The aerial incursions finally ended, and then came economic aggression. What was one of the arguments adduced by the enemies of the agrarian reform? They said that the agrarian reform would cause chaos in agricultural production; that production would diminish considerably and that the United States Government was concerned because Cuba might not be able to fulfil its commitments regarding supplies to the American market.

That was the first argument, and I think it appropriate that at least the new delegations in the General Assembly should become somewhat familiar with some of the arguments that are adduced, because sometimes they may have to answer similar arguments that agrarian reform would bring about the ruin of the country.

That was not the case. Had the agrarian reform brought about the ruin of the country, had the agricultural production been reduced so drastically, then the United States Government would not have had to carry on its economic aggression. They truly believed in what they said. Did they sincerely believe in what they said when they asserted that the agrarian reform was going to bring about a decrease in production? Perhaps they believed it. It is logical that everyone believes in the manner in which he has prepared his mind to believe. It is possible they imagined that if the all-powerful monopolies did not produce the sugar, we Cubans were incapable of doing so. It is possible and perhaps they even trusted in our ruining the country. And it is plain that if the revolution had ruined the country, the United States would not have had to attack us. They would have left us to sink or swim and the United States would have appeared as a good and honorable government while we revolutionaries came in and ruined our country, and it would have been proof that you cannot carry out a revolution because revolutions ruin countries.

Fortunately, that is not the case. There is living proof that revolutions do not ruin countries and the proof has just been given by the Government of the United States of America. It has proved many things, but, among others, it has proved that revolutions do not ruin countries and that the imperialist governments do try to ruin countries. Cuba was far from being ruined and, therefore, it had to be ruined. Cuba needed new markets for its products, and we would honestly and frankly ask any delegate present which country does not want to sell what it produces. Which country does not want its exports to increase? We wanted our exports to increase, and this is what all countries want. This obviously must be a universal law, because only egotistical interests can oppose the universal interests for trade and commercial exchange, which surely is one of the most ancient aspirations and needs of mankind.

We wanted to sell our products and we went to seek new markets. We signed a trade treaty with the Soviet Union, according to which we would sell one million tons and we would purchase a certain amount of Soviet products or articles. Surely no one can say that this is incorrect. There may be some who do not do so because it is not in keeping with certain interests. We did not have to ask permission of the State Department in order to sign a trade treaty with the Soviet Union because we considered ourselves and we continue to consider ourselves and we will always consider ourselves a truly independent and free country.

When the supplies of sugar began to diminish in our favor, then we received the hard blow. By a request of the executive power of the United States, the Congress approved an act according

to which the President or the executive power of the United States was empowered to reduce to what limits he deemed appropriate the import quotas of sugar from Cuba. The economic weapon was wielded against our revolution. The justification for this stand had already been prepared in advance by the public relations people. A campaign had been carried on for a long time, because you know perfectly well that here monopoly and public relations are completely identified.

The economic weapon was wielded. At one fell swoop our sugar quota was cut down by about one million tons – sugar that was already produced, that had been prepared for the North American market, and thus to deprive our country of the resources it needed for development – to reduce our country to impotence in order to obtain political advantages.

That measure had been prohibited expressly by the regional international law. As all representatives of Latin America know, economic aggression is expressly condemned by regional international law. Yet the Government of the United States violated that law, wielded the economic weapon and cut our sugar quota by almost a million tons, and that was that. They could do it. What could Cuba do when confronted by that fact? Turn to the United Nations. Go to the United Nations. Denounce the political and economic aggression. Denounce the incursions, the overflights. Denounce the economic aggression, aside from the constant interference of the United States Government in the policy and politics of our country; the subversive campaigns carried out by the United States Government against the revolutionary Government of Cuba.

So we turn to the United Nations. The United Nations has power to deal with these matters. The United Nations in the hierarchy of international organizations stands at the head; it is the greatest international authority. It has authority over and above the Organization of American States. Besides which we wanted the problem aired in the United Nations because we understand full well the condition of dependency on the United States in which the economy of Latin America finds itself.

The United Nations was seized of the question. It seeks an investigation to be carried out by the Organization of American States. The Organization of American States meets. Fine. And what was to be expected? That the Organization of American States would protect the country attacked; that the Organization of American States condemn the political aggression against Cuba and especially that the Organization of American States condemn the economic aggression of which we were the victims. We expected this. We had a right to expect it. When all was said and done, we were a small people, a member of the Latin American community of nations. When all was said and done, we were one more victim. We were not the first and we shall not be the last because Mexico had already been attacked more than once militarily. A great part of the Mexican territory was taken from it in a war, and on that occasion, the heroic sons of Mexico went from the castle of Chapultepec, and cast themselves from the rock, robed in the Mexican flag before they surrendered. Those were the hero-children of Mexico.

And that was not the only aggression. That was not the only time that American infantry forces plowed their way into Mexican territory. Nicaragua was invaded and for seven long years it was heroically defended by Cesar Augusto Sandino. Cuba was attacked more than once; and so were Haiti and Santo Domingo. Guatemala was also attacked. Who among you honestly could deny the intervention of the United Fruit Company and the State Department of the United States in the overthrow of the legitimate Government of Guatemala? I understand full well there are those who consider it their official duty to be discreet on this matter, and may even be willing to come here and deny this, but in their conscience they know that I am now speaking nothing but the truth.

Cuba was not the first victim of aggression. Cuba was not the first country in danger of aggression. In this hemisphere everybody knows that the Government of the United States has always imposed its law, the law of the mightiest; in accordance with this law it has destroyed the Puerto Rican nationality and has kept its dominion over that island; that law, in accordance with which it took over the Panama Canal and holds the Panama Canal. This was nothing new. Our country should have been defended. But our country was not defended. Why? And let us here dig into the depths of this matter and let us not merely study the forms. If we stick to the dead letter, then we are guaranteed; if we stick to reality, we have no guarantee whatsoever because reality imposes itself over and above the law set forth in international codes, and that reality is that a small country attacked by a powerful country was not defended and could not be defended.

But what happened in Costa Rica? Lo and behold, by an ingenious production a miracle happened in Costa Rica. What resulted from Costa Rica was not a condemnation of the United States or the Government of the United States. I do wish to avoid any misunderstanding about our feelings: we regard the Government of the United States and the people of the United States as two completely different entities. The Government of the United States was not condemned in Costa Rica for the sixty overflights by pirate aircraft. The Government of the United States was not condemned for the economic and other aggression of which we had been the victim. No, the Soviet Union was condemned. That was really bizarre. We had not been attacked by the Soviet Union. We had not been the victims of aggression by the Soviet Union. No Soviet aircraft had flown over our territory. Yet in Costa Rica there was a finding against the Soviet Union for interference.

The Soviet Union only said that, figuratively speaking, if there was military aggression against our country the Soviet Union could support the victim with rockets. Since when is support for a weak country, support conditioned on an attack by a powerful country, regarded as interference? In law there is something called an impossible condition. If a country considers that it is incapable of committing a certain crime, well then, it is enough for it to say that there is no possibility that the Soviet Union will support Cuba, because there is no possibility that they will attack the little country. The principle was established that the intervention of the Soviet Union had to be condemned. About the bombing of Cuba nothing was said. Of the aggression against Cuba, nothing.

After all, there is something which we should remember and that in some way should worry all of us. We are all, without any of those present being excluded, actors and participants in a crucial moment in the history of humanity. At times, apparently, we are not made aware of censure, that is, apparently we are not aware of criticism and that is so especially, when we forget that, as we have had the privilege of playing a part in this all-important moment of history, some day history too will judge us for our acts.

And in the face of the refusal to defend our country in Costa Rica, we smile, because history will judge that episode. And I say it without bitterness. It is difficult to condemn men. Many times men are the playthings of circumstances and we, who know what the history of our country was and who, in addition, are unusual witnesses of what our country is going through today, understand how terrible it is for the economy and the whole life of the nations to be subjected to the power of an alien economy.

I need only note that my country was left defenseless in Costa Rica. Furthermore, there was an interest in not bringing this matter back to the United Nations — perhaps because it was felt that it is easier to obtain a mechanical majority in the OAS and after all, that fear is not easy to explain when we have observed that in the United Nations mechanical majorities very often operate. With all due respect to this Organization, we must say here that is the reason why the people, our people, yes, our people, that people who are over there in our homeland, who are a people who have learned much and who are a people — we say it with pride — who are equal to the role they are playing in this moment and of the heroic struggle which they are carrying on, that is why our people, who have learned much in the school of these recent international events, know that in the end, when its rights have been denied, when the aggressive forces fall upon it, it has the supreme recourse and the heroic recourse of resisting when its rights are not safeguarded either in the Organization of American States or in the United Nations.

That is why we, the small countries, still do not feel so sure that our rights will be preserved. That is why when we small countries want to be free we know that we are doing so at our risk, and because in truth the peoples, when they are united, when they defend a just cause, can depend on their own energies, because it is not a matter of a few men, as they have tried to make it appear, ruling a country. It is a matter of a whole people ruling a country, firmly united and with a great revolutionary conscience defending its rights. And the enemies of the Cuban revolution should know that, because if they do not know that they are committing a terrible error.

Those are the circumstances in which the revolutionary process in Cuba has taken place. How did we find the country? Why have the difficulties arisen? And yet the Cuban revolution is changing things. What was yesterday a hopeless land, a land of misery, a land of illiterates, is gradually becoming one of the most enlightened, advanced and developed lands of this Continent.

The Revolutionary Government, in but twenty months, has created 10,000 new schools. In this brief space of time, we have doubled the number of rural schools that had been set up in fifty years and Cuba today is the first country of America that has fulfilled all its scholastic needs, that has a teacher in the farthest corner of the mountains. In this brief period of time, the Revolutionary Government has built 25,000 houses in the rural zones and also in the urban areas. Fifty new townships are this moment being built in our country. The most important military fortresses today house tens of thousands of students. In the coming year, our country intends to start its great battle against illiteracy, with the ambitious goal of teaching every single inhabitant of the country to read and write. And with that end in view, organizations of teachers, of students, of workers, are going out, that is — the entire people, is preparing itself for an intensive campaign to wipe out illiteracy. Cuba will be the first country of America which, after a few months, will be able to say it does not have one single solitary illiterate in the country.

Today our people are receiving the assistance of hundreds of doctors who have been sent out into the rural areas to fight against the endemic sicknesses, the parasitism, and to improve the sanitary conditions of the nation.

In another aspect, in the preservation of the natural resources, we can also point with pride to the fact that in one year, in the most ambitious plan for the conservation of natural resources being carried out in this continent, including the United States of America and Canada, we have planted close to fifty million timber-yielding trees.

Youths who were unemployed, who had no schools, have been organized by the Revolutionary Government and today are being gainfully and usefully employed by the country, and at the same time they are being prepared for productive work. Agricultural production in our country has noted an almost unique event, the increase of production since the first moment. Since the first moment, we have increased our agricultural production. Why? Because, first of all, the Revolutionary Government turned more than 100,000 agricultural workers into landowners, and at the same time they preserved the large-scale production by means of agricultural co-operatives — that is to say, the large-scale production was maintained, and it was maintained through co-operatives — thanks to which we have been able to apply the most modern technical procedures and processes to our agricultural production, and since the very beginning we have noted an increase in production.

All these enterprises of social benefit — of teachers, of houses, of hospitals — have been carried out without sacrificing the resources that we had earmarked for development. At this moment, the Revolutionary Government is carrying out a program of industrialization of the country, and the first plants are already being built in Cuba.

We have reasonably and sensibly utilized the resources of our country. Previously, for example, \$35,000,000 worth of cars were imported into Cuba, and \$5,000,000 worth of tractors. A principally agricultural country imported seven times more automobiles than tractors. We have turned this fraction upside down, and now we are importing seven times more tractors than automobiles.

Close to \$500,000,000 was recovered from the politicians who had enriched themselves during the tyranny; close to \$500,000,000 in cash and in assets is the total value of what we were able to get back from the corrupt politicians who had been sucking the blood of our country.

The correct investment of this wealth and of these resources is allowing the Revolutionary Government at the same time to carry out a plan of industrialization and of increase in agriculture, to build houses, build schools, send teachers to the farthest corners of the country, and give medical assistance to everybody, in other words, carry out a true program of social development.

And precisely now, at the Bogota meeting, as you know, the Government of the United States proposed a plan. But, was it a plan for economic development? No, it proposed a plan for social development. Now, what does this mean? What is understood by this? Well, it was a plan for building houses, building schools and building roads. But does this settle the problem? Does this solve it all? How can there be a solution to the social problems without a plan for economic development? Is it that they want to hoodwink the other people of Latin America? What are the

families going to live on when they inhabit those houses, if those houses are actually built? What shoes, what clothes, are they going to wear, and what food are they going to eat, when they go to those schools, if those schools are actually built? Or perhaps is it not known that, when a family does not have clothes or shoes for the children, the children are not sent to school? With what resources are they going to pay the teachers? With what resources are they going to pay the doctors? With what resources are they going to pay for the medicines? Do you want a good way of saving on medicines? Increase the nutrition of the people for what is spent in feeding the people will not have to be spent on hospitals.

In view of the tremendous reality of underdevelopment, the Government of the United States now comes out with a plan for social development. Naturally it is something that it is concerning itself with some of the problems of Latin America. Thus far it has not cared very much. Is it not a coincidence that now, at this juncture, it is worried about these problems? And any similarity with the fact that that concern has arisen after the Cuban revolution, well, possibly they'll say that it's purely coincidental.

Thus far the monopolies have certainly not cared very much except for exploiting the underdeveloped countries, but suddenly the Cuban revolution rears its head and the monopolies start worrying. While our economy is attacked and they try to squash us, with the other hand the United States Government offers charity to the peoples of Latin America, not the resources for development which is what Latin America wants but resources for social development, for houses for people to live in who have no work, for schools to which children cannot go, and for hospitals that would not be necessary if there were enough food to eat in Latin America.

After all, although some of my Latin American colleagues may feel it is their duty to be discreet here, I would welcome a revolution such as the Cuban revolution which at any rate has forced the monopolists to return at least a small part of what they have been taking in natural resources and of the sweat of the peoples of Latin America.

Although as you know, we are not included in that assistance, we are not worried about that; we do not get angry about such things. We have been solving such problems for a long time, problems of schools and housing and so on. But we think that at least some may feel that we are using this for propaganda purposes, because the President of the United States said that some would take this rostrum for propaganda purposes. Well, any of my colleagues in the United Nations has a standing invitation to visit Cuba. We do not close the doors of Cuba to anyone; nor do we restrict anybody's movements. Any of my colleagues in this Assembly can visit Cuba whenever he wishes and with his own eyes see what is going on. You know that chapter of the Bible that speaks of doubting Thomas, who had to see before he could believe – I think it was St. Thomas. We can invite any newspaperman, any correspondent, any member of a delegation to visit Cuba and see what a people can do when a people uses its own resources and when it invests those resources honestly and reasonably. But we are not only settling our problems of housing and schools. We are settling our problems of development, because without a settlement of the problems of development there can be no solution of the social problems themselves. But what is happening? Why does the United States Government not wish to speak of development? The answer is clear-cut. Because the Government of the United States does not want to quarrel with the monopolies, and the monopolies need natural resources. They need investment markets for their capital. That is the paradox. That is where the contradiction lies. That is why the true solution of this problem is not sought. That is why the planning is not carried out for public investment and the development of the underdeveloped areas. It is good that this be stated frankly, because when all is said and done, we, the underdeveloped countries, are a majority in this Assembly – in case anyone was unaware of this fact. When all is said, and done, too, we are witnesses to what is going on in the under-developed countries. Yet the true solution is not sought and much is said here of the participation of private capital. Naturally this means markets for the investment of surplus capital, like that investment that was amortized in five years. The Government of the United States cannot propose a plan for public investment, because this would divorce it from the very raison d'être of the United States Government, which is the United States monopolies – this is the true reason – and there is no need to beat about the bush – why no true program of economic development is planned: to preserve the land of Latin America, of Africa and of Asia, to keep it the private domain of those who wish to invest their surplus capital.

Thus far we have referred to the problems of our country. Why haven't those problems been solved? Is it because we did not want them solved? Hardly. The Government of Cuba has always been ready to discuss its problems with the Government of the United States, but the Government of the United States has not been ready to discuss the Cuban problems with Cuba. It must have its reasons for not wanting to discuss these problems with Cuba.

Right here I have the note sent by the Revolutionary Government of Cuba to the Government of the United States on January 27, 1960. It says:

"The differences of opinion between the two Governments that are subject to diplomatic negotiation can be settled by such negotiation. The Government of Cuba is ready and willing to discuss these problems without reservation and with complete amplitude and declares itself as being unaware of any obstacles in the path of such negotiations being carried out through any of the traditional means set up for these purposes. On the basis of mutual respect and reciprocal benefit, the Government of Cuba wishes to maintain and increase diplomatic relations as well as economic relations with the people and Government of the United States, and understands that on this basis the traditional friendship between these two peoples is indestructible.

"On February 22nd of this year the Revolutionary Government of Cuba, in accordance with its desire to renew through diplomatic channels the negotiations already begun on issues outstanding between the United States and Cuba, has decided to set up a commission with the necessary powers to carry out negotiations and discussions in Washington on a mutually agreed date.

"The Revolutionary Government of Cuba wishes to clarify, however, that the renewal and continuance of such negotiations must obviously be subject to the proviso that the Government or the Congress of your country does not take unilateral measures prejudging the results of the above-mentioned negotiations or prejudicial to the economy of the people of Cuba. It seems obvious that the adherence of the Government of Your Excellency to this point of view would not only contribute to the improvement of relations between our respective countries but would also reaffirm the spirit of brotherly friendship that has traditionally linked and still links our peoples.

"It would also allow both Governments, in an atmosphere of serenity and with the widest scope possible, to examine the questions that have affected the traditional relations between Cuba and the United States of America."

What was the reply of the Government of the United States?

"The Government of the United States cannot accept the conditions for negotiations expressed in your Excellency's note which said in effect that measures not be taken of a unilateral nature on the part of the Government of the United States that might affect the Cuban economy or the people of Cuba, be it through the legislative branch or the executive branches. As has been expressed by President Eisenhower on January 26th, the Government of the United States of America must keep itself free in the exercise of its own sovereignty to take whatever measures it deems necessary, conscious of its international commitments and obligations, for the defense of the legitimate rights and interests of its people."

In other words, the Government of the United States does not deign to discuss matters with the small country of Cuba on the Cuban problems. What hope can the people of Cuba nurture for the solution of these problems?

All the facts that we ourselves have noted conspire against the solution of such problems, and it is good for the United Nations to take this very much into account, because the Government of Cuba, and the people of Cuba too, are, most justifiably, concerned at the aggressive turn in the American policy regarding Cuba, and it is appropriate and good that we should be up-to-date and well informed.

First of all, the Government of the United States considers it has the right to promote and encourage subversion in our country. The Government of the United States of America is promoting the organization of subversive movements against the Revolutionary Government of Cuba, and we here denounce it in the General Assembly. Concretely we wish to denounce, for example, that in a Caribbean Island, a territory which belongs to Honduras and which is known as the Swan Islands, the Government of the United States has taken over this Island in a military manner.

There are now North American infantrymen there, despite the fact that this is Honduran territory. And there, in violation of international law, despoiling a neighbor country of its territory, in violation of the international conventions which govern radio broadcasting, it has set up a powerful transmitter, which it has put at the disposal of war criminals and of the subversive groups which are sheltered in this country. And there, in addition, military training is being given to promote subversion and to promote the landing of armed forces on our Island.

It might be good for the representative of Honduras to the United Nations General Assembly to stress Honduras' right to that part of its territory. But that is a matter incumbent upon the representative of Honduras. What does concern us is that a piece of territory belonging to a neighbor country, taken away in a filibustering fashion by the Government of the United States, should be used as a base for subversion and for attacks against our territory.

I want careful note taken of this denunciation that we make on behalf of the Government of the people of Cuba.

Does the Government of the United States feel that it has the right to promote and encourage subversion in my country, violating all international treaties, violating the radio frequencies of my country, with great harm to our own radio stations? Does this mean that the Cuban Government, then, has the right also to promote subversion in the United States of America; that we have the right to violate the air and radio frequencies of the United States of America?

What right can the Government of the United States have over us or over our Island that it permits itself the right to demand the same respect from other peoples?

Let the United States return the Swan Islands to Honduras, because it never had jurisdiction over such Islands.

Yet there are even more alarming circumstances that frighten our people even more. We know that because of the Platt Amendment, imposed by force on our people, the Government of the United States took upon itself the right to establish naval bases on our territory, a right that it imposed on us by force and which it has maintained by force.

A naval base in the territory of any country is surely reason for just preoccupation and concern. First of all, there is the concern and the fear that a country which has followed an aggressive and warlike policy possesses a base in the very heart of our Island, that turns our Island into the possible victim of any international conflict, that forces us to run the risk of any atomic conflict without our having even the slightest intervention in the problem — because we have nothing to do with the problems of the United States Government, or the crises that the Government of the United States produces and provokes. And yet, there is a base in the heart of our Island that is a dire risk for us in the case of any conflict breaking out.

But is that the only danger? Far from it. There is a fear and a danger that is even greater, since it is closer to home. The Revolutionary Government of Cuba has repeatedly expressed its concern at the fact that the imperialist government of the United States of America may use that base in the heart of our national territory as a means of promoting self-aggression, to justify an attack on our country. And I repeat: the Revolutionary Government of Cuba is seriously concerned, and makes known this concern, at the fact that the imperialist government of the United States of America may take as a pretext a self-aggression in order to try to justify its attack and its assault on our country.

This concern on our part is increasing, and it is increasing because the aggressiveness and the aggressions are increasing and the symptoms become more frightening. For instance, I have here an Associated Press cable which came to my country and which reads as follows:

“Admiral Arleigh Burke, United States Chief of Naval Operations, says that if Cuba should attempt to take the Guantanamo Naval Base by force ‘we would fight back.’

“In a copyrighted interview published today in the magazine U.S. News & World Report (please forgive any errors I may make in pronouncing these words) Admiral Burke was asked if the Navy is concerned about the situation in Cuba under Premier Fidel Castro.

“ ‘Yes, our Navy is concerned – not about our base at Guantanamo, but about the whole Cuban situation,’ Admiral Burke said. He added that all the military services are concerned!

“ ‘Is that because of Cuba’s strategic position in the Caribbean?’ he was asked.

“ ‘Not necessarily,’ Admiral Burke said. ‘Here is a country with a people normally very friendly to the United States, people who have liked the people of this country and whom we have liked. Yet, here has come a man with a small, hard core of Communists determined to change all of that. Castro has taught hatred of the United States and he has gone far toward wrecking his country.’

“Admiral Burke said ‘we would react very fast’ if Castro moved against the Guantanamo base.

“ ‘If they would try to take the place by force, we would fight back,’ he added.

“To a question whether Soviet Premier Khrushchev’s threat about retaliatory rockets gives Admiral Burke ‘second thoughts about fighting in Cuba,’ the Admiral said:

“ ‘No. Because he’s not going to launch his rockets. He knows he will be destroyed if he does.’” He means Russia will be destroyed. (Journal American, September 26, 1960)

First of all, I must emphasize the fact that, for this gentleman, the increase of industrial production in my country by 35 per cent, the fact that we have given employment to more than 200,000 new Cubans, the fact that we have solved many of the social problems of our country, all these facts constitute for this Admiral the ruination of our country and, therefore, they take upon themselves the right to set the stage for aggression. Just see how an estimate is made, an estimate which is dangerous, since he intimates that in the case of an attack on us we are to stand alone. This is something that Admiral Burke has not thought up for himself. But suppose for a moment that Admiral Burke is mistaken. Let us imagine for a moment that Admiral Burke, although an admiral, is wrong. If he is wrong, he is playing irresponsibly with the fate of the world. Admiral Burke and all those of his aggressive militarist bloc are playing with the fate of the world. I think that the fate of each of us warrants no concern. Yet, we who represent the peoples of the world are duty bound to concern ourselves with the fate of the world, and it is our duty to condemn all those who play irresponsibly with the fate of the world. They are not playing only with our own people’s fate; they are playing with the destiny of their own people too, and also with the entire planet.

Or does this Admiral Burke think that we are still living in the time of the blunderbuss? Does he not realize, this Admiral Burke, that we are living in the atomic age, in an age whose disastrous and cataclysmic destructive forces could not even be imagined by Dante or Leonardo, with all their imagination, because this goes further than man has been able to dream of in his worst nightmares. And yet, he calculates, and, of course, already the United Press spread this throughout the world. The magazine is about to come out. Already the campaign is begun. The hysteria is being whipped up and the imaginary danger of a Cuban attack against the base of Guantanamo is being bruited about.

But this is not all. Yesterday a United Press Information Circular appeared containing a declaration by United States Senator Styles Bridges who, I believe, is a member of the Armed Forces Committee of the Senate of the United States who said that the United States must be prepared, at any expense, to maintain its naval base at Guantanamo in Cuba.

He said: "We must go as far as necessary to preserve that base and to defend that gigantic installation of the United States. We have naval forces there; we have military forces and we have the Marines, and if we were attacked we should defend it, for I consider it to be the most important base in the Caribbean area."

This member of the Senate Committee of the Armed Forces did not entirely discard the use of atomic weapons in the case of an attack against the base at Guantanamo. What does this mean? This means that not only is hysteria being whipped up, not only is a systematic preparation of the right conditions being indulged in, but we are being threatened with the use of atomic weapons. Among the many things that we can think of, one is to ask this Mr. Bridges whether he is not ashamed of himself to threaten anyone with atomic weapons, especially a small country like Cuba.

As far as we are concerned, and with all due respect, I must say that the world's problems are not settled by threatening nor by sowing fear. Our humble people of Cuba is there. It exists, even though they may dislike the idea, and the revolution will go ahead, however much they dislike that. And besides, our humble and small people has to resign itself to its fate. And our people is not afraid. It is not shaken by this threat of the use of atomic weapons.

And what does this mean? That there are many countries that have American military bases, but they are not directed against the Governments that granted the concessions — at least, not as far as we know. In our case, we are in the most tragic position because this is a base in our insular territory, pointed at the heart of Cuba and pointed at the heart of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba, in the hands of those who declare themselves enemies of our country, of our revolution and of our people.

In the entire history of bases set up anywhere in the world the most tragic case is that of Cuba — a base thrust upon us by force, in a territory that is unmistakably ours, that is a good many miles from the coast of the United States, a base against the Government of Cuba, imposed by force and a constant threat and a constant cause for concern.

That is why we must say here that all this talk of attacks is intended, in the first place, to create hysteria in preparation of an atmosphere of aggression against our country and that we have never spoken one single, solitary word of aggression, or any word that might be taken as implying any type of attack on the Guantanamo base, because we are the first in not wanting to give imperialism a pretext to attack us.

We state this categorically and positively, but at the same time we also declare that from the moment when that country has become a threat to the security and tranquillity of our people, a threat to our people itself, the Revolutionary Government of Cuba is seriously considering requesting, within the framework of international law, that the naval and military forces of the United States be withdrawn from the Guantanamo base, from that portion of the national territory, and there will be no option for the imperialist Government of the United States but to withdraw its forces, because how will it be able to justify before the world its right to install an atomic base or a base which is dangerous to our people in a bit of our national territory, in an unmistakable island which is the portion of the world where the Cuban nation is situated?

How will they be able to justify to the world any right to maintain and to hold sovereignty over a part of our territory? How will they be able to stand before the world and justify such an arbitrary procedure? And since it will be unable to justify itself to the world when our Government requests it, within the framework of international law, the Government of the United States will have no option but to abide by the canons of international law.

But this Assembly has to be up to date and informed regarding the problems of Cuba, because we must be alert against confusion and against misrepresentation. We have to explain these problems very clearly because with them go the security and the fate of our country. That is why we want very clear note to be taken of the words I have spoken — especially if note is taken of the fact that there seems to be no chance of correcting the erroneous impression that the politicians of this country have regarding the question of Cuba.

Here, for example, I have declarations of Mr. Kennedy that are enough to surprise anybody. On Cuba he says: "We must use all the power of the Organization of American States to avoid Castro's interfering in other Latin American countries and force him to return Cuba to freedom." They are going to give freedom back to Cuba!

"We must state our intention," he says, "of not allowing the Soviet Union to turn Cuba into its Caribbean base, and apply the Monroe Doctrine." More than half-way through the twentieth century and this candidate speaks of the Monroe Doctrine! "We must force Prime Minister Castro to understand that we propose to defend our right to the naval base of Guantanamo." This is the third person who speaks of this problem. "And we must show the Cuban people that we agree with its legitimate economic aspirations," — why did they not do this before — "that we know full well their love for freedom, and that we shall never be satisfied until democracy returns to Cuba." What democracy? The democracy made by the monopolists of the United States of America?

So that we may understand why airplanes fly from United States territory to Cuba, attention should be given to what this gentleman says:

"The forces that are struggling for freedom in exile and in the mountains of Cuba must be supplied and assisted, and in other countries of Latin America communism must be confined without allowing it to expand or spread."

If Kennedy were not an illiterate and ignorant millionaire he would understand that it is not possible to carry out a revolution against the peasants in the mountains with the aid of the land-owners and that every time that imperialism has tried to stir up counter-revolutionary groups the peasant militia has put them out of combat in the course of a few days. But it seems he has been reading some novels or seeing various Hollywood films — some story about guerilla warfare — and believes it possible, socially speaking, to carry on guerilla warfare in Cuba.

In any case, this is discouraging. And let nobody think, nevertheless, that these opinions on Kennedy's statements indicate that we feel any sympathy for the other one, for Mr. Nixon, who has made similar statements. As far as we are concerned, both of them lack political brains.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to have to interrupt the Prime Minister of Cuba, but I am sure that I am faithfully reflecting the feelings of the Assembly as a whole when I ask him to consider whether it is right and proper that the candidates in the current election in this country be discussed at the rostrum of the Assembly of the United Nations.

I am sure that in this matter the distinguished Prime Minister of Cuba will, on reflection, see my point of view, and I feel that I can rely with confidence on his good-will and co-operation. On that basis I would ask him kindly to continue with his remarks.

MR. CASTRO: It is not our intention in the least to infringe upon the rules which determine our behavior in the United Nations, and the President can depend fully on my co-operation to avoid having my words misunderstood. I have no intention of offending anyone. It is somewhat a question of style and, above all, a question of trust in the Assembly. In any case, I will try to avoid wrong interpretations.

Up to this point we have been dealing with the problem of our country, the fundamental reason for our attending this session of the United Nations. But we understand perfectly that it would be somewhat selfish on our part if our concern were to be limited to our specific case alone. It is also true that we have used up the greater part of our time informing the Assembly on the case of Cuba, and that there is not much time left for us to deal with the remaining questions, to which we wish briefly to refer.

Still, the case of Cuba is not an isolated case. It would be an error to think of it only as the case of Cuba. The case of Cuba is the case of all under-developed peoples. It is, as it were, the case of the Congo; it is like the case of Egypt, of Algeria, of West Irian; it is like that of Panama, which wishes to have its Canal; it is like that of Puerto Rico, whose national spirit they are destroying; like that of Honduras, a portion of whose territory has been taken away. In short, although we

have not made reference specifically to other countries, the case of Cuba is the case of all the under-developed colonial countries.

The problems which we have been describing in relation to Cuba apply perfectly well to all of Latin America. The control of Latin American economic resources is exercised by the monopolies which, when they do not directly own the mines and take charge of the working of them, as in the case of copper in Chile, Peru and Mexico and in the case of zinc in Peru and Mexico, as well as in the case of oil in Venezuela, they are the owners of the public-service companies, which is the case with the electric services in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, or of the telephonic services, which is the case in Chile, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela, Paraguay and Bolivia. Or, they exploit commercially our products, as is the case with coffee in Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Guatemala, or with the exploitation, marketing and transportation of bananas by the United Fruit Company in Guatemala, Costa Rica and Honduras, or with cotton in Mexico and Brazil. That economic control is exercised by North American monopolies of the most important industries of the country, industries which are dependent completely on the monopolies.

Woe betide them on the day when they too shall wish to carry out agrarian reform! They will be asked for immediate, efficient and just payment. And if, in spite of everything, they carry out agrarian reform, the representative of a sister nation who comes to the United Nations will be confined to Manhattan; they will not rent hotel space to him; insults will be poured upon him and he may even, possibly, be mistreated, in fact, by the police themselves.

The problem of Cuba is only an example of what Latin America is. How long must Latin America wait for its development? According to the point of view of the monopolists it will have to wait ad calendas Graecas. Who is going to industrialize Latin America? The monopolists? Certainly not.

There is a report of the United Nations on economic matters which explains how even private capital, instead of going to the countries that need it most, for the setting up of basic industries in order to contribute to the development of those countries are preferably being channeled to the more industrialized countries because there, according to their findings, private capital finds greater security. Naturally the economic secretariat of the United Nations has had to recognize the fact that there is no possible chance of development through investment of private capital – that is, through the monopolies.

The development of Latin America will have to be achieved through public investment planned and granted unconditionally without any political strings attached because, naturally, we all like to be representatives of free countries. None of us likes to represent a country that does not feel itself to be in full possession of its freedom. None of us wants the independence of his country to be subjected to any interest other than that of the country itself. Therefore the assistance must be without any political strings attached.

That help has been denied to us does not matter. We did not ask for it. However, in the interest of and for the benefit of the Latin American peoples we do feel in duty bound, out of solidarity, to stress the fact that the assistance must be given without any political conditions whatsoever. Public investment for economic development, not for social development, which is the latest thing that has been invented to hide the true need for economic development of the countries.

The problems of Latin America are like the problems of the rest of the world: Africa and Asia. The world is divided up among the monopolies; those same monopolies that we see in Latin America are also seen in the Middle East. There the oil is in the hands of monopolistic companies that are controlled by the financial interests of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, in Iran, in Iraq, in Saudi Arabia, in Kuwait, in Qatar and, finally, in all corners of the world. The same thing happens, for example, in the Philippines. The same thing happens in Africa.

The world has been divided among the monopolistic interests. Who would dare deny this historic truth? The monopolistic interests do not want to see the development of peoples. What they want is to exploit the natural resources of the countries and to exploit the people in the bargain, and the sooner they amortize their investments or get them back, the better it is for them.

The problem that the Cuban people have suffered from the imperialist Government of the United States are the same problems that Saudi Arabia would have if it decided to nationalize its oil fields, or if Iran or Iraq decided to do so; the same problems that Egypt had when it quite justifiably and correctly nationalized the Suez Canal; the very same problems that Indonesia had when it wanted to become independent; the same surprise attack that was made against Egypt and on the Congo. Has there ever been a lack of pretexts for the colonialists or imperialists when they wanted to invade a country? They have never lacked pretexts; somehow they have always managed to pull out of the hat the pretext that they wanted. Which are the colonialist countries? Which are the imperialist countries? There are not four or five countries but four or five groups of monopolies which possess the world's wealth.

If a person from outer space were to come to this Assembly, someone who had read neither the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx nor the cables of the UP or the AP or the other publications of a monopolistic character, and if he were to ask how the world was divided and if he saw on a map of the world that its riches were divided among the monopolies of four or five countries, he would say: "The world has been badly divided up, the world has been exploited." Here in this Assembly, where there is a majority of the under-developed countries, he would say that the great majority of the people you represent are being exploited, that they have been exploited for a long time; the forms of exploitation may have varied, but they are still being exploited. That would be the verdict.

In the statement made by Premier Khrushchev there is a statement that attracted our attention because of the value that it holds, and that was when he said that the Soviet Union did not have colonies and that the Soviet Union has no investments in any country. How great would our world be today, our world which today is threatened with catastrophe, if all the representatives of all countries could make the same statement: Our country has no colonies and no investments in any foreign country.

But why labor the matter any further? This is the essence of the matter; including the essence of peace and war, the essence of the arms race or of disarmament. Wars, since the beginning of humanity, have emerged for one reason, and one reason alone, the desire of some to despoil others of what the others possess. Do away with the philosophy of spoiling, and you will have done away forever with the philosophy of war. Do away with the colonies, wipe out the exploitation of countries by monopolies, and then humanity will have achieved a true period of progress. Until that stage is reached, the world will have to live constantly under the terror and fear of being involved in any crisis and wiped out by an atomic conflagration. Why? Because there are those who wish to perpetuate this despoilment and because there are those who wish to maintain this exploitation.

We have spoken here of the Cuban case. Our case has taught us, because of the problems we have had to confront with imperialism, that it is imperialism that is against us. But, when all is said and done, imperialisms of any nature are all the same, they are all allied. A country exploiting the countries of Latin America or of any part of the world is an ally in its exploitation of the others in the world who do the same thing.

There was one thing that alarmed us considerably in the statement made by the President of the United States of America when he said in the General Assembly:

"In the developing areas, we must seek to promote peaceful change, as well as to assist economic and social progress. To do this — to assist peaceful change — the international community must be able to manifest its presence in emergencies through United Nations observers or forces.

"I should like to see Member countries take positive action on the suggestion in the Secretary-General's report looking to the creation of a qualified staff within the Secretariat to assist him in meeting future needs for United Nations forces."

In other words, after considering Latin America, Africa, Asia and Oceania as zones of development, he suggests that there be peaceful changes, and he proposes that in order to bring this about, observers and United Nations forces be used. In other words, the United States came into being as the result of a revolution against those who kept her a colony. The rights of peoples to self-determination, by means of revolutions if necessary, to throw off colonialism or any type of

oppression was recognized in Philadelphia by the Declaration of July 4, 1776, and today the Government of the United States of America proposes to use United Nations forces to avoid revolutions and changes. President Eisenhower continued:

“The Secretary-General has now suggested that Members should maintain a readiness to meet possible future requests from the United Nations for contributions to such forces. All countries represented here should respond to this need by earmarking national contingents which could take part in United Nations forces in case of need. The time to do it is now – at this Assembly.

“I assure countries which now receive assistance from the United States that we favor use of that assistance to help them maintain such contingents in the state of readiness suggested by the Secretary-General.”

In other words, he proposes to the countries that are receiving technical assistance that he is ready to give them more assistance for the formation of this United Nations emergency force. He continued:

“To assist the Secretary-General’s efforts, the United States is prepared to earmark also substantial air and sea transport facilities on a stand-by basis, to help move contingents requested by the United Nations in any future emergency.”

In other words, the United States also offers its planes and ships for the use of such emergency forces. We wish to state here that the Cuban delegation does not agree with that emergency force until all peoples of the world can feel sure that these forces will not be used at the disposal of colonialism and imperialism, and especially when any of our countries can at any moment become the victim of the use of such forces against the rights of our people.

There are a number of problems inherent here, and on this much has been said by a number of delegations. For reasons of time, we should like merely to express our opinion on the problem of the Congo.

Naturally, since we hold an anti-colonialist position against the exploitation of under-developed countries, we condemn the way in which the intervention by the United Nations forces was carried out in the Congo. First of all, these forces did not go there to act against the forces that had intervened and interfered, for which originally they were sent. All necessary time was given for the first dissension to be caused, and when this did not suffice, further time was given and the opportunity was made for the second division to occur in the Congo.

And finally, while the broadcasting stations and the airfields were occupied, further time was given for the emergence of the third man, as he is known; and the saviors who emerge in these circumstances are all too well known to us; because in 1934 in my country this type of savior also appeared, his name was Fulgencio Batista. In the Congo his name is Mobutu. In Cuba he paid a daily visit to the American Embassy, and it appears that in the Congo the same applies. Not because I say so. No, because no less than a magazine which is a major defender of the monopolies, and therefore cannot be against it, is the one who says so. Certainly they cannot be in favor of Lumumba, because they are against him and in favor of Mobutu. But it explains who he is, how he devoted himself to his work, and it winds up by saying – this is Time magazine to which I am referring; the latest issue of Time says that “Mobutu became a frequent visitor to the United States Embassy and held long talks with officials there.”

“One afternoon last week, Mobutu conferred with officers at Camp Leopold, and got their cheering support. That night he went to Radio Congo” – that Lumumba had not been allowed to use – “and abruptly announced that the army was assuming power.” In other words, all this occurred after frequent visits and lengthy conversations with the officials of the United States Embassy. This is Time magazine speaking. Time surely is an advocate and champion of the monopolies. In other words, the hand of the colonialist interests has been obvious and visible in the Congo and therefore our position is frankly that bad faith has been in evidence, that favoritism was shown the colonial interests and that all the facts point to the people of the Congo, and the reason in the Congo, being on the side of the only leader who remained there to defend the interests of his country, and that leader is Lumumba.

If the Afro-Asian countries manage, in spite of this situation and of the appearance of this mysterious third man in the Congo, called upon apparently to overthrow, together with the legitimate Governments, the legitimate interests of the Congolese people, if they manage to conciliate all these legitimate interests of the people, so much the better. But if this conciliation is not achieved then reason and right will be on the side not only of the one who has the support of the people and of the Parliament, but is the one who stood and confronted the interests of the monopolies and who stood shoulder to shoulder with his people.

Regarding the problem of Algeria, I do not think I need say that we are 100 per cent on the side of the rights of the people of Algeria for independence. Furthermore, it is ridiculous – as are many ridiculous things which exist in the world, imbued with an artificial life, given it by vested interests – to pretend that Algeria is part of the French community. Similar efforts have been made by other countries when they have wanted to keep their own colonies in other times. That which is known as assimilation historically has been a failure. Let us look at the question inversely: suppose Algeria was the metropolitan area and declared that part of Europe formed an integral part of its metropolitan area. This is obviously an idea that is dragged in arbitrarily, that has no sense whatsoever and it is most ludicrous to maintain. Algeria belongs to Africa, as France belongs to Europe. Yet for a number of years these African people have been struggling heroically against the metropolitan area.

Perhaps even while we are discussing matters here calmly, over villages and hamlets of Algeria the bombs and shells of the French Government or Army may be falling. And men may be dying in a fight where there can be no possible doubt on whose side is right, a fight that could be settled, even taking into account the interests of that minority which is the one which that was taken as a pretext in order to deny the right of independence to nine-tenths of the population of Algeria. And yet we do nothing. We were so quick to go to the Congo and so half-heartedly do we turn to Algeria. And if the Algerian Government, which is a Government because it represents millions of Algerians who are fighting and struggling, asks for United Nations forces to go there, would we go with the same enthusiasm? I wish we would go with the same enthusiasm, but with very different purposes, in other words, that we go to Algeria to defend the interests of the Algerians and not the interests of the colonizers.

We are on the side of the Algerian people, as we are on the side of the other people of Africa that are still colonies and on the side of those colored people discriminated against in the Union of South Africa. And as we are on the side of the peoples that wish not only to be politically free – because it is very easy to raise a flag, a coat of arms, sing an anthem and put another color on the map – but also who would be economically free, because there is a truth which we should all bear in mind as the first of all truths, and that is that there can be no political independence unless there be economic independence. Political independence is a fiction unless there is economic independence, and therefore the aspiration to be economically and politically free is one that we defend; not only the right to have a flag, a coat of arms and representation in the United Nations.

We want to raise another right here, a right that was proclaimed by our people at an enormous public manifestation a few days ago. I refer to the right of the under-developed countries to nationalize without indemnity, the natural resources of and the monopolistic investments in their countries. In other words, we proclaim the nationalization of the natural resources of any foreign investments in the under-developed countries. And if the highly industrialized countries wish to do likewise, we shall not oppose them.

For countries to be truly free politically, they must be truly free economically. They must be assisted. We may be asked: What about the value of the investments? And we shall then ask: what about the value of the profits that have been derived from the colonies and the under-developed countries for decades, if not centuries?

We should like to support a proposal made by the head of the delegation of Ghana – namely, the proposal to rid African territory of military bases, and therefore of nuclear weapon bases. In other words, the proposal is to keep Africa free from the dangers of nuclear war. Something has already been done so far as Antarctica is concerned. Why, as we advance on the road to disarmament, do we not also advance on the road to freeing certain regions of the earth from the danger of nuclear war? If Africa is to be reborn – that Africa which we are learning to know today, not the Africa that we were shown on the maps, not the Africa that we were shown in Hollywood films and

about which we read in novels, not the Africa of semi-naked tribes carrying lances, who were ready to run away at their first encounter with the white hero, the white hero whose heroism increased in proportion to the number of Africans he killed, not that Africa but the Africa which today stands here represented by such leaders as Sekou Toure and Nkrumah, the Africa of the Arab world, of Nasser, that true Africa, the oppressed Continent, the exploited Continent, that Continent from which came millions of slaves, that Africa which has suffered so greatly during its history, toward that Africa we have a duty: to preserve it from the danger of destruction.

Let the other peoples compensate!

Let the West somehow compensate for all that it has made Africa suffer by preserving it from the danger of atomic war, by declaring it a zone free from that danger! Let no atomic bases be established there! Make that Continent, while we are unable to do anything else, into the sanctuary where human life is preserved!

We warmly support that proposal, and on the question of disarmament we entirely support the Soviet proposal. We do not blush when we say this: we openly and warmly support the Soviet proposal. We understand that it is a correct proposal; its terms are precise; it is clearly defined.

We have very carefully read the speech delivered here, for example, by President Eisenhower who basically did not speak of disarmament; nor did he speak of the development of the under-developed countries; nor did he speak of the problem of colonies. The citizens of this country who are so swayed by lying propaganda should objectively and carefully read the speech of the President of the United States and the speech of the Prime Minister of the Soviet Union in order to see where there is a true concern for the problems of the world, in order to see where clear and sincere language is used, in order to see who wants disarmament and who does not want disarmament, and why.

The Soviet proposal could not be more clear. Why should there be reservations when such a tremendous problem has never before been so clearly discussed?

The history of the world has shown, tragically, that armaments races always lead to war. Yet at no time has war entailed such a dreadful holocaust for humanity as at the present time, and it follows, never has the responsibility been greater than at the present time. What has the Soviet Union's delegation proposed on this problem which so worries mankind since its very existence is involved? On this problem the Soviet delegation has presented a proposal for general and complete disarmament. Can anything more be asked? And if anything more is required, then ask for it. If further guarantees are asked for, let those who want them speak out. But the Soviet proposal could not be more clear. It cannot be rejected without assuming the dreadful responsibility for war and all the destruction that war brings with it. Why should the problem be taken away from the General Assembly? Why does not the delegation of the United States want this problem to be discussed here among all of us? Have we no discernment? Are we not supposed to be aware of this problem? Is it necessary for a committee to meet? Why should not the problem be discussed in the most democratic way possible? That is, that the General Assembly, all the delegates, discuss here the problem of disarmament and that everyone lay his cards on the table so that we may clearly know who stands for disarmament and who does not, who wants to play at war and who does not, and who is betraying humanity's aspiration to peace and who is not, for humanity must never be dragged into a holocaust because of egotistical and illegitimate interests.

Our peoples must be safeguarded from that holocaust, so that all that knowledge and human intelligence has created, does not serve to destroy humanity itself.

The Soviet delegation spoke in clear terms — and I am speaking objectively here — I invite you gentlemen to study those proposals, I invite you gentlemen to place all your cards on the table. Above all, this is not only a question of delegations now; this is a question of world public opinion. The warmongers and the military-minded must be unveiled before the opinion of the world. This is not a problem for the minority. This is a problem for the world itself. And we must strip the masks from those warmongers, those militarists. That is the task for world public opinion. Not only must this be discussed in the plenary of the General Assembly, but it must be discussed before the eyes of all humanity, before the great assembly of the world itself, because in the case of a war it will not be the responsible ones alone who will be exterminated; it will be hundreds of millions of innocent ones who are not the least to blame who will be exterminated. And that is why we meet

here as representatives of the world, or at least part of it, because the world is not complete yet and it will not be complete before we have the People's Republic of China represented here, too, a quarter of the world that is absent from this Assembly. But those of us who are here have a duty to speak frankly and not to pass the buck. This is too serious a problem to silence some and allow others to speak. This is more important a problem than economic assistance and all the other commitments, because ours is the commitment to preserve the life of humanity. All of us have to discuss the problem, we all have to speak about it, and all of us have to struggle so that peace will prevail in the world — or at least to strip the masks from the militarists and the warmongers in the world. Especially, if we of the under-developed countries want to have some hope that progress will be achieved; if we want to have some hope that our peoples will enjoy a better standard of living. Then let us struggle and strive for peace, and let us struggle and strive for disarmament, for with one-fifth of what the world spends and squanders on armaments, we could promote a development of the under-developed countries, with a rate of growth of ten per cent per annum. With a fifth of what the nations spend of their economic resources on armaments, it goes without saying, the standard of living of the peoples could be raised.

Now, what are the difficulties of disarmament? Who is interested in being armed? Those who are interested in being armed to the teeth are those who wish to hold on to their colonies, those who want to hold on to their monopolies, those who want to hold on to the oil of the Middle East, the natural resources of the Middle East and of Asia and of Africa and who, in order to defend these interests need force and might. And, you know full well that it was because of the right of might that these territories were occupied and colonized; that because of this right of might, millions of men were made slaves. It is might and force that keep this exploitation going in the world. Therefore, the first who do not want disarmament are those who wish to maintain this right of might, those who wish to keep their hands on the wealth of countries and on the cheap labor of under-developed countries.

I said I was going to speak clearly, and I could not refer to truth or voice truth in any other words. The colonialists, then, are those who are opposed to disarmament. Then we will have to fight, with world opinion on our side, to impose disarmament on them, as we will have to fight to impose on them the rights of all peoples to political and economic self-determination. The monopolies are against disarmament because, besides the fact that with arms they can defend their interests, the arms race has always been good business for the monopolies. For example, everybody knows that the great monopolies in this country doubled their capital during the Second World War. Like vultures, the monopolies feed on the dead of the wars — and war is good business. Let us then strip the masks from those who do business with war, those who enrich themselves by war. Let us open the eyes of the world and show them who are those warmongers who play and trade with the fate of humanity, those who trade on the dangers of war, especially when war can be so terrifying as to leave no hope of escape nor of salvation for anybody.

To carry out that task we, a small under-developed country, invite especially those other countries that are under-developed and the whole Assembly to fight and to bring the problem here for discussion, because we would never forgive ourselves for the consequences, if, because of neglect or a lack of firmness or strength on our part on this fundamental problem, the world were to find itself involved, more and more, in the dangers of war.

There is one point remaining which, as I have read in some newspapers, was one of the points that the Cuban delegation wanted to raise. That is the question of the People's Republic of China. A number of delegations have already spoken of this. We merely wish to say that it is a negation of the *raison d'être* of the United Nations, and of the very essence of the United Nations, that this problem has not even been discussed here. Why? Because of the will of the United States Government not to discuss the matter? Because, for that reason, the General Assembly of the United Nations must renounce its right to discuss this problem?

In recent years, a number of countries have become Members of our Organization. It is to deny an historical reality and a fact, it is to deny the realities of life itself, to oppose the discussion of the right of the People's Republic of China to be represented here, in other words, of ninety-nine per cent of the inhabitants of one of the most highly populated countries of the world to be represented here. It is preposterous, and it is absurd that this matter cannot even be discussed. How long are we to play this sad role of not discussing the problem in the United Nations — when there

are represented here, for example, the representatives of Franco? Mr. President, will you allow me to express my opinion, with all due respect, on this specific point, without offense to anybody?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is only fair to the Prime Minister to make clear the position of the Chair. The Chair does not think it is in keeping with the dignity of the Assembly or the decorum that we like to preserve in our debates that references of a personal nature should be made to the Heads of States or the Heads of Governments of Member States of the United Nations, whether present here or not. I hope that the Prime Minister will consider that a fair and reasonable rule.

MR. CASTRO: I merely wanted to make some comments, Sir, on how the United Nations emerged. The United Nations emerged after the struggle against Fascism, after tens of thousands of men had died on the battlefield. From that struggle which took so many lives this Organization emerged as a hope. But there are some extraordinary paradoxes. While North American soldiers were falling in Guam, Guadalcanal, Okinawa and many other islands in the Pacific, there fell on the Chinese mainland too, fighting against the same enemy, the brothers of those same men to whom today we deny the very right to discuss their own entry into the United Nations. Though, at the same time, the soldiers of the Blue Division were fighting to defend Fascism, the Chinese People's Republic is denied entry and is even denied the right to discuss its case in the United Nations. Still, that regime that was born of Italian Fascism and German Nazism and that took power thanks to Hitler's armies and Mussolini's blackshirts, received the accolade of membership in the United Nations.

China represents one-fourth of the world. Which Government truly represents that people which has the largest population in the world? None other than the Government of the People's Republic of China. Yet there we keep another group, in the middle of a civil war that was interrupted by the interference of the United States Seventh Fleet. May we ask here by what right the fleet of one country, and an extracontinental country at that — and let us stress that when so much is spoken here of extracontinental interference — can interfere in a purely domestic affair of China. It would be interesting to hear an explanation for this. It was done with the sole purpose of maintaining there a group that was on its side and stopping the entire liberation of the territory. That is an absurd and illegal position, from any point of view, and that is why the Government of the United States does not want the problem of the representation of the People's Republic of China to be discussed here.

We want it to be clearly noted that this is our viewpoint. We support a discussion of that problem here and the seating in the United Nations of the true representatives of the Chinese people. I understand very well that it is somewhat difficult and invidious for anyone here to speak in any but stereotyped terms regarding representatives of nations, but may I say that we came here free of all prejudice and we came here to analyze the problems objectively, without fear of what others might think of us, and without fear of the consequences of our conduct or our stand. We have been honest and sincere. We have been frank without being Francoist, because we do not want to be accomplices to that injustice perpetrated against many Spaniards who have for more than twenty years been imprisoned in Spain and who fought together with the Americans in the Lincoln Brigade, colleagues of those same North Americans who tried to raise the name of that great North American, Lincoln, in Spain.

We shall trust in the reason and in the honesty of all. There are aspects of these world problems with regard to which we should like to sum up our views, on which there can be no doubt whatever. We have made known the problem of Cuba, which is part of the world problems. Those who attack us today are those who assist in attacking others elsewhere in the world. The Government of the United States cannot be on the side of the people of Algeria, because the United States is an ally of France; it cannot be with the Congolese people, because the United States is an ally of Belgium; it cannot be with the Spanish people, because it is an ally of Franco. It cannot be in favor of the Puerto Rican people, whose nationality it has for fifty years been destroying; it cannot be with the Panamanians, who are claiming their canal. It cannot allow the growth of civilian power in Latin America, Germany or Japan. It cannot be on the side of the peasants who want their own lands because it is an ally of the land-owners. It cannot be with the workers who seek better living conditions in any part of the world, because it is an ally of the monopolies. It cannot be with the colonies that wish for liberation, because it is an ally of the colonizing Powers. In other words, it is with Franco, with the colonizers of Algeria, with the colonizers of the Congo. It is in favor of perpetuating its interests over the Panama Canal; it is in favor of colonialism all over the world.

It is in favor of the resurgence of German militarism and Japanese militarism. The Government of the United States forgets the millions of Jews who died in the concentration camps of Europe at the hands of the Nazis who are today recovering their influence in the German Army.

It forgets the French who were murdered and slaughtered there in their heroic struggle against German occupation; it forgets the North American soldiers who died at Omaha Beach, in the Ruhr, the Siegfried Line, in the Rhine and on all the fronts of Asia.

It has to be against the integrity and the sovereignty of peoples. Why? Because it has to be amputating the sovereignty of peoples in order to maintain its military bases. And each military base is another dagger stuck into the sovereignty of a nation; each base is another amputated and lopped-off sovereignty.

That is why the United States must be against the sovereignty of the people, because it must constantly limit sovereignty in order to maintain its policy of bases around the Soviet Union.

We understand that the people of the United States do not have these problems clearly explained to them, but suffice it for the people of North America to realize what would have happened to their tranquillity if in Cuba, in Mexico or Canada the Soviet Union were to begin to set up a belt of atomic bases? The population certainly would not feel secure; it would not feel tranquil.

World public opinion, including North American public opinion, has to be taught to understand the problems from another point of view, from the other person's point of view. The under-developed countries cannot always be presented as aggressors; the revolutionaries cannot always be presented as aggressors, as enemies of the North American people.

We cannot be enemies of the American people, because we have seen Americans, such as Carleton Beals or Waldo Frank, illustrious and distinguished intellectuals, who weep at the thought of the errors that are committed, at the lack of hospitality which was committed particularly against us.

There are many Americans, those humane Americans, those intellectuals, the progressive writers, the most valuable writers, and it is in them that I see the nobility of the true, first pioneers of the Washingtons, Jeffersons and Lincolns of this country.

I am not using demagoguery; I am speaking with the sincere admiration that we feel for those who one day knew how to free their people, destroy colonialism and fight; but not for this country to become today the ally of all the reactionaries of the world, the ally of all the gangsters in the world, the ally of the landowners, the monopolists, the militarists and the fascists of the world, the ally of the most retrograde and reactionary groups of the world.

They struggled for their country to stand ever as a champion of nobility and just ideals. We know full well what they will be told today, tomorrow and always about us to hoodwink them. It makes no difference. We are fulfilling our duty in expressing our views and expressing these true facts in this historic Assembly.

We proclaim the right of people to their integrity and to their nationality; and those who know that nationalism means a restoration of the peoples' goods; of their wealth, their natural resources, conspire against nationalism.

In one word, we are in favor of all the noble aspirations of all peoples. That is our position; there we stand. We are on the side of the just; we are and always will be against colonialism, exploitation; against monopolies, against war-mongering, against the arms race and against the playing at war. Against those we shall always stand. That will be our position.

In conclusion, fulfilling what we consider to be our duty, we bring to this Assembly the essential part of the Havana Declaration. You know that the Havana Declaration was a reply of the Cuban people to the Declaration of Costa Rica. It was not ten, nor one hundred, nor 100,000; there were more than a million Cubans – and those who doubt it can go and count them at the next concentration, or the general assembly that we hold in Cuba, and you will see a spectacle of a fervent and

conscious people that I think you will scarcely have seen elsewhere; a sight that you can only see when the people are truly, fervently defending the most sacred interests.

At that assembly, in answer to the Declaration of Costa Rica in full consultation with the people, and by acclamation of the people, these principles were proclaimed as the principles of the Cuban revolution:

“THE NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PEOPLE:

“Condemns the latifundium, a source of poverty for the peasants and a backward and inhuman agricultural system; condemns starvation wages and the iniquitous exploitation of human labor by immoral and privileged interests; condemns illiteracy, the lack of teachers, of schools, of doctors and hospitals, the lack of protection of old age that prevails in Latin America; condemns the inequality and exploitation of women; condemns the discrimination against the Negro and the Indian; condemns the military and political oligarchies that keep our peoples in utter poverty and block their democratic development and the full exercise of their sovereignty; condemns the handing over of our countries’ natural resources to the foreign monopolies as a submissive policy that betrays the interests of the peoples; condemns the governments that ignore the feelings of their people and yield to the directives of Washington; condemns the systematic deception of the people by the information media that serve the interests of the oligarchies and the policies of oppressive imperialism; condemns the news monopoly of the Yankee agencies, instruments of the North American trusts and agents of Washington; condemns the repressive laws that prevent workers, peasants, students and intellectuals, who form the great majority of each country, from organizing themselves and fighting for the realization of their social and patriotic aspirations; condemns the monopolies and imperialistic organizations that continuously loot our wealth, exploit our workers and peasants, bleed and keep in backwardness our economies, and submit the political life of Latin America to the sway of their own designs and interests.”

In short, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba condemns both the exploitation of man by man and the exploitation of under-developed countries by imperialistic finance capital.

Therefore, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba proclaims before America:

The right of the peasants to the land; the right of the workers to the fruit of their labor, the right of children to education; the right of the ill to medical and hospital attention; the right of youth to work; the right of students to free, experimental, and scientific education; the right of Negroes and Indians to “the full dignity of man,” the right of women to civil, social and political equality; the right of the aged to a secure old age; the right of intellectuals, artists, and scientists to fight, with their works, for a better world; the right of nations to their full sovereignty; the right of nations to turn fortresses into schools, and to arm their workers, their peasants, their students, their intellectuals, the Negro, the Indian, the women, the young and the old, the oppressed and exploited people, so that they may themselves defend their rights and their destinies.

Some wanted to know the line followed by the Revolutionary Government of Cuba. There you have our line.